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ABSTRACT

All consonant sounds involving the sound /y/ omit the letter Y, such as few, cute, immune, and view. Perhaps 75% of high school students whose formal reading level is below seventh grade will not be able to pronounce these words that contain the "invisible" Y sound. Good students usually do not have to be taught this pattern, but average and below-average students need the chance to learn this pattern from formal presentations and drills. (A list of over 200 invisible Y words with their correct and incorrect pronunciations is attached.) (RS)

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ED 378 529

The Case of the "INVISIBLE" Y

or

Why is there a Y in You

and NOT in

Union (YOONYUN), Eunice, and Huge?

by

Don McCabe

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What is AVKO?

AVKO is a non-profit tax-exempt membership organization founded in 1974 that is:

- subsidized by donations and grants.
- open to membership to anyone interested in helping others learn to read and write.
- run by members from as far away as Hawaii and Quebec and whose daily operations are handled by volunteers.
- planning to build and operate a model reading research center in a YEAR-AROUND camp setting that would economically and efficiently service the needs of dyslexics of all ages.
- trying to spread the concept that parent and spouse tutoring in spelling/reading skills can be successfully taught in adult community education classes and that members of a problem reader's support group can greatly assist the efforts of any volunteer tutor working in the literacy movement.
- providing newsletters and economical opportunities to pursue individual research projects and to take part in large scale cooperative research projects that have immediate practical applications.
- attempting to accomplish these goals primarily through the profits generated by the inservices, workshops and the sale of materials developed for the special needs of students, parents, and adults – but AVKO still needs donations to survive.

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The Case of the "INVISIBLE" Y
or
Why is there a Y in You
and NOT in
union (YOONYUN), Eunice, and huge?

When I first began administering the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT), I used to cringe every time one of my students would misread the simple word ***huge***.

Finally, it dawned on me. ***I*** was the slow learner. ***Huge*** is NOT a simple word to learn to read. It has a hidden problem. The students were misreading ***huge*** as "hug" or "hooge" because there was no letter for the /y/ sound and no one had told them about the ***ge*** digraph that is pronounced as /j/.

Just as students can learn to automatically respond to the ***ch*** digraph so too, they can respond to ***ge*** as /j/ whether it is in ***G*eor*ge*** /jorj/ or pi***ge***on /pij un/ or hu***ge*** /hyooj/.

Not responding to the ***ge*** as /j/ is only part of the problem with what I used to believe was a simple four letter word, the word ***huge***.

The letter u when signaled by the so-called SILENT E to be pronounced LONG still has two different pronunciations.

LONG OO WORDS	LONG YOO WORDS
Luke (oo as in spook)	rebuke (ree bYook)
tune (oo as in moon)	immune (im mYoon)
tube (oo as in boob)	cube (kYoob)
reduce (oo as in loose)	puce (pYoos)
intrude (oo as in food)	feud (fYood)
rule (oo as in cool)	mule (mYool)

We might say that the letter ***u*** is curious (k**Y**OOr ee us). Sometimes the letter has the additional sound of the consonant Y in front of it, and sometimes it doesn't.

All-A students usually (**Y**oo zhoo ully) don't have to be taught this phenomenon. They pick it up on their own. But what about the average and below average students? Shouldn't they have a chance to learn from formal presentations and drills?

I predict that high school students whose formal reading level has been determined to be BELOW 7TH GRADE will miss at least 75% of the following list of words that contain an "INVISIBLE" Y sound, which is one of the "FANCY" patterns not systematically taught. In fact, even in the most comprehensive book[1] dealing with

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[1] **Blockcolsk'Y, V. et. al. *30,000 Selected Words Organized by Letter, Sound and Syllable.* Tucson: Communication Skill Builders, 1979.**

sounds, every single consonant blend involving the letter y is omitted.

The reason: All consonant blends involving the sound /y/ omit the letter Y.

Examples: /by/ as in beautiful; /fy/ as in few, /gy/ as in gewgaws, /hy/ as in humanity, /k'Y/ as in cute, /my/ as in immune, /py/ as in puny, /vy/ as in view.

I hope that others in the reading field, especially those in the universities and those who write the basal series for the publishing giants will soon begin including the systematic teaching of such fancy phonic patterns as the "INVISIBLE" Y.

See the following pages for over two hundred examples of "INVISIBLE" Y WORDS. If you happen to think of words containing the INVISIBLE Y which we have omitted, please write us. We do want to have the most complete listing possible.

Invisible Y Word	**Pronounce it**	**Please DON'T say**
abuse, child	uh b'YOO-ss	a BUS see
abuse, to	uh b'YOO-z	a BOOZE
abusive	uh b'YOO siv	a BOOZE sieve
accumulate	uh k'YOO m'YOO lay't	ack cum ul late
accusation	ak YOO zay shun	ack CUSS at I on
accusative	uh k'YOO zuh tive	ack cuss at Ivy
accuse	uh k'YOO-z	ack KOOZE

Invisible Y Word	Pronounce it	Please DON'T say
accusing	uh k'YOO zing	ack CUSS sing
acute	uh k'YOOT	a CUTTY
ambulance	AM b'yoo lun-ss	am BULL lance
amuse	uh m'YOO-z	a MOOSE
amusing	uh m'YOO zing	a MOOSE sing
attribute, an	AT truh b'YOOt	a TRIB boot
attribute, to	uh TRIB b'Yoot	a TRIB butty
beautiful	b'YOO tuh ful	be awt uh ful
beautify	b'YOO tuh fyh	be awt tee fy
beauty	b'YOO tee	be autty
Beulah	b'YOO lah	be ullah
Buchanan	b'Yoo KAN un	butch a nan
bucolic	b'Yoo KAWL ik	buckle lick
bugle	b'YOO gul	bug lee
bureau	b'YOO roh	burry aw
bureaucracy	b'YOO RAH kruh see	burry oh crazy
bureaucrat	b'YOO roh krat	burry oh crat
bureaus	b'YOO rohz	burry ohs
bureaux	b'YOO rohz	burry awks
burette	b'YOO ret	boor et
butane	b'YOO tayn	boo tane
butte	b'YOOT	butty
Butte	b'YOOT	but tea
butyl	b'YOO til	boot tile
calculate	KAL k'Yoo layt	cal cool ate
calculation	KAL k'Yoo lay shun	cal cool layshun
calculus	KAL k'Yoo luss	cal cool us
circular	SUR k'Yoo lur	sir color
circularity	sur k'Yoo LAY'r uh tee	sir cool air eye tee
circulation	sir k'Yoo LAY shun	sir cool lay shun
commune	kum mY'OON	calm moon
communion	kum m'YOON yun	calm onion
community	kum m'YOO nuh tee	calm money tie
commute	kum m'YOOT	come moot
compute	kum p'YOOT	come poot
Confucius	kun f'YOO shus	con fook'Y us
confuse	kun f'YOOZE	con fussy
confusing	kun f'YOOZING	con fussing
confusion	kun f'YOOZH ZHUN	con fuss eye on
continue	kun TIN Yoo	con tie new
contribute	kun TRIB Yoot	con try boot
contributions	con truh b'YOO shunz	con try but ions
contributor	kun TRIB Yoo tur	con try but or
Cuba	k'YOO ba	cub bah
Cuban	k'YOO bun	cub ban
cube	k'YOOB	cubby
cubic	k'YOO bik	cub bick
cubical	k'YOO buh kul	cub bickle

Invisible Y Word	Pronounce it	Please DON'T say
cubism	k'YOO bism	cub bism
cubit	k'YOO bit	cub bit
cucumber	k'YOO cum bur	cuck come ber
cue	k'YOO	coo
culinary	k'YOO lin ayr ee	cull in airy
cumulate	k'YOO m'Yoo layt	come ull ate
cumulative	k'YOO m'Yoo lah tiv	come ull at tive
cumulus	k'YOO m'Yoo luss	come ull us
cuneiform	k'YOO nuh fohrm	cunny eye form
cupid	k'YOO pid	cup id
cupola	k'YOO puh lah	cup O. la
curate	k'YOOR it	curr ate
curative	k'YOOR uh tiv	curr Rat tive
curator	k'YOOR uh tur	curr at or
cure	k'YOOR	curry
Curie	k'YOOree	curry
curio	k'Yoor ree O	curr I owe
curiosity	k'Yoor E. AH suh tee	curr I owe city
curious	k'YOOR EE uss	curr I. O. us
curriculum	curr Rick k'YOO lum	curr I cull lum
cute	k'YOOT	cutty
cuticle	k'Yoo tuh kull	cut I. cull
debut	day BYOO	Dee Butt
debutante	Day byoo TAHNT	Dee butt ant tea
defuse	dee f'YOOZ	dee fussy
deuce	DOO-ss or d'YOO-ss	Dee you see
dew	DOO or d'YOO	D. Wuh
Dewey	Do wee (or) d'YOO wee	Dee wee
disrepute	diss ree p'YOOT	dis ree poot
distribute	dis TRIB Yoot	dis TRY boot
ecumenical	ek k'Yoo MEN uh kull	E. come en I kull
electrocute	ee LEK truh k'Yoot	elect roe coot
electrocution	ee LEK truh k'Yoo shun	electro cut I on
eucalyptus	YOO kuh lip tiss	E. uck al lip tus
Eucharist	YOO kur rist	E. Utch are wrist
euchre	YOO kur	E. utch ree
Euclid	YOO klid	E. uck lid
Eugene	YOO jeen	E. ug any
eulogy	YOO loh jee	E. ull loggy
Eunice	YOO niss	E. un ice
eunuch	YOO nuk	E. un nutch
euphemism	YOO fem izm	E. up he miss um
euphoria	YOO fohr ee uh	E. up hore E. uh
Eurasia	Yoor RAY zhuh	E. ur as E. uh
Europe	YOOR up	E. ur rope
eustachian	Y'oo STAY shun	E. us tatch I an
euthanasia	"Youth in Asia"	E. ut HAN as I a
ewe	YOO	E. we

Invisible Y Word	Pronounce it	Please DON'T say
excuse me	ek'sk'YOOz mee	ex cuss E.
excuse,	there's no ek sk'YOO-ss	ex cuss E.
excused	ek sk'YOOz-d	ex cussed
execute	EKS uh k'Yoot	eck zeck coot
execution	eks uh k'YOO shun	ex E. cut I on
failure	FAYL Yoor	Fay lure
feud	f'YOOD	fee ud
feudal	f'YOO dull	fee ud all
feudalism	f'YOO dull ism	fee ud Al ism
few	f'YOO	fee wuh
fugue	f'YOO-G	foo goo
fury	f'YOOR ree	furry
furious	f'YOOR ree us	fur I owe youse
fuse	f'YOOZ	fussy
fusion	f'YOO zhun	fuss I on
futile	f'YOO til	futt I'll
futility	f'Yoo TIL uh tee	foo tee lie tie
gewgaw	g'Yoo gaw	goo gaw
heuristic	h'Yoor istic	he ur istic
hew	h'YOO	he wuh
hue	h'YOO	hoocy
huge	h'YOOJ	huggy
Hugh	h'YOO	hug H.
Hughes	h'YOOZ	hug he's
Hugo	h'YOO goh	hug O.
Huguenot	H'YOO guh naht	Who goocy not
human	h'YOO mun	hum man
humane	h'YOO may'n	hum Annie
humanism	h'YOO mun izm	hum man is'm
humanitarian	h'Yoo man uh TAY'r ee un	hum & it Arian
humanitarianism	h'Yoo man uh TAY'r ee un izm	hum & it are eye an is'm
humanity	h'Yoo MAN uh tee	hum an itty
humanize	h'YOO mun "eyes"	hum man izzy
Hume	h'YOOM	hummy
humid	h'YOO mid	hum mid
humidifier	h'Yoo MID uh FYH ur	hum mid I fire
humidify	h'Yoo MID uh FYH	hum mid iffy
humidity	h'Yoo MID uh tee	hum mid I tie
humiliate	h'Yoo MIL lee AY't	hum I lie ate
humiliation	h'Yoo MIL lee AY shun	hum I lie a tie on
humor	h'YOO mur	hum more
humoresque	h'Yoo mur ESK	hum or rescue
humorist	h'YOO mur ist	hum more ist
humorous	h'Yoo mur uss	hum more oh us
humus	h'Yoo muss	hum us
Huron	h'Yoor on	her Ron
immune	im m'YOON	im moon
immunity	im m'YOO nuh tee	im mun I. tie

Invisible Y Word	Pronounce it	Please DON'T say
impure	im p'YOOR	im poor
impurity	im p'YOOR uh tee	im poor uh tee
infuriate	in f'YOOR ee ayt	in fur I ate
insecure	in suh k'YOOR	in see coor
insecurity	in suh k'YOOR uh tee	in C. kur uh tee
jocular	JAH'k Yoo lur	Joe color
jocularity	jah'k Yoo LAYR uh tee	Joe color a tie
Kewpie	k'YOO pee	key wuh pie
mew	m'YOO	me wuh
mucous	m'YOO kuss	muck oh us
muezzin	m'Yoo EZZ in	moo ease in
Muir	m'YOOR	Moo ear
mule	m'YOOL	mool
Munich	m'YOO nik	mun iich
municipal	m'yoo NISS uh pul	mun icy pal
munificent	m'yoo NIF uh sunt	mun I fie cent
mural	m'yoor ul	murr Al
muscular	muss k'Yoo lur	muss color
muscularity	muss k'Yoo LAYR uh tee	muss color I. tie
muse	m'YOOZ	mussy
museum	m'Yoo ZEE um	mussy um
music	m'YOO zik	muss sick
musician	m'Yoo ZISH un	muss sick I an
mutant	m'YOO tunt	mutt ant
mutation	m'Yoo TAY shun	mutt at I on
mute	m'YOOT	mutty
mutilate	m'YOO tuh layt	mutt I late
mutilation	m'Yoo tuh LAY shun	mutt I lay shun
mutual	m'Yoo choo ull	muttle
nuclear	noo (or) n'YOO klee ur	nuckle ear
nucleus	noo (or) n'YOO klee us	nuckle us
nuclei	noo (or) n'yoo klee "eye"	nuckle I
obscure	ob sk'YOOR	obs koor
obscurity	ob sk'YOOR uh tee	obs koor I tie
oracular	ohr RAK k'Yoo lur	Ora color
particular	pahr TIK k'Yoo lur	party color
particularity	pahr tik k'Yoo LAYR uh Tee	party color eye tie
peculiar	pee k'YOOL yur	peck koo liar
peculiarity	pee k'Yoo lee AYR uh tee	Pea kully airy tie
persecute	PUR suh k'Yoot	purse cut E.
persecution	pur suh k'YOO shun	purse cut I on
pew	p'YOO	pea wuh
pewter	p'YOO tur	pea wutter
phew	f'YOO	fuh he wuh
puberty	p'YOO bur tee	pub burr tie
pubic	p'YOO bik	pub bick
puce	p'YOO-ss	puck'Y
puerile	p'YOOR il	poo er I'll

Invisible Y Word	Pronounce it	Please DON'T say
puke	p'YOOK	puck'Y
pule	p'YOOL	pulley
Punic	p'YOO nik	pun nick
punitive	p'YOO nuh tiv	pun I tive
puny	p'YOO nee	punny
pupil	p'YOO pil	pup ill
pure	p'YOOR	poor
puree	p'Yoor RAY	poor E.
purify	p'YOOR uh fyh	purr I fie
purist	p'YOOR ist	poor wrist
Puritan	p'YOOR uh tun	poor eye tan
purity	p'YOOR uh tea	poor I tie
purulence	p'YOOR yoo lun-tss	poor uh lents
purulent	p'YOOR yoo lunt	poor uh lent
putative	p'YOO tuh tiv	put a tive
queue	k'YOO	kwee ooey
rebuke	re b'YOOK	re boo k
refusal	re f'YOO zul	re fuss Al
refuse, to	re f'YOOZ	re fussy
refuse, the	REF f'Yoo-ss	re foose
regular	REG g'Yoo lur	re gull ar
regularity	Reg g'Yoo LAY'R uh tee	re gull are I tie
regulation	Reg g'yoo LAY shun	re gull at I on
repute	ree p'YOOT	re putty
reputation	Rep p'yoo TAY shun	re put at I on
rescue	RES k'Yoo	re skooey
review	re v'YOO	rev eye E. wuh
reviewer	re v'YOO ur	rev eye E. were
scrupulous	SKROO p'YOO luss	scrupp pull luss
secure	see k'YOOR	see coor
security	suh k'YOOR uh tee	see coor I tie
skew	sk'YOO	skoo
skewer	sk'YOO ur	skoo ur
spectacular	spek TAK k'Yoo lur	speck tuh color
spew	sp'YOO	spoo
spume	sp'YOOM	spoom
sputum	sp'YOOT um	sput tum
stew	stoo (or) st'YOO	stee wuh
steward	stoo (or) st'YOO wurd	stee ward
stewardess	stoo (or)) st'YOO wurd diss	stee ward Dess
Stewart	stoo (or) st'YOO wurt	stee wart
Stuart	stoo (or) st'YOO wurt	stoo art
student	stoo (or) st'YOO dunt	stud dent
studious	stoo (or) st'YOO Dee us	stud I owe us
stupendous	stoo (or)st'YOO pen duss	stup end us
stupid	stoo (or) st'YOO pid	stup id
subterfuge	SUB ter f'YOOJ	sub tur fooge
succulent	SUK k'yoo lent	suck cull lent

Invisible Y Word	Pronounce it	Please DON'T say
suffuse	suh f'YOOZ	suff foose
Teuton	Toot'n (or) T'YOO't un	Tea utt on
therapeutic	thair uh p'YOO tik	the rap E. ut tic
tuba	(too bah) or t'YOO bah	tub A.
tube	(toob) or t'YOOB	to be
tuberculosis	t(y)oo Bur k'Yuh LOH sis	tub uh kull loss is
Tudor	"two door" (or) t'YOO dohr	tudd or
Tuesday	"two's D" or t'YOOZ Dee	too ess Day
tuition	too (or) t'Yoo ish un	too it I on
tulip	too (or) t'Yoo lip	tull lip
tumor	too (or) t'Yoo mur	tum more
tumult	too (or) t'Yoo mult	tum mult
tuna	too (or) t'Yoo nah	tun nah
tune	too (or) t'Yoon	tunny
Tunisia	too (or) t'Yoo knee zha	tun is I a
tutelage	too (or) t'Yoo tuh lidge	tut E'L age
tutor	too (or) t'Yoo tur	tut or
tutorial	too (or) t'Yoo TOHR ee ul	tot OR eye AL
ubiquitous	yoo BIK wuh tuss	ubby quit us
ukase	yoo KAY'ss	uck as E.
uke	yook	uck'Y
Ukrainian	yoo KRAYN ee un	un uck rain I an
ukulele	yoo kuh LAY Lee	uckle Lee Lee
Ulysses	yoo Liss eez	Ul why says
unanimity	yoo nuh NIM uh tea	un an im uh tea
unanimous	yoo NAN uh muss	un any mouse
UNESCO	yoo NESS KOE	un ess koe
uni-	YOO nuh	un eye
UNICEF	YOO nuh seff	un I seff
unicolor	YOO nuh color	un eye color
unicycle	YOO nuh sigh kull	un eye sickle
unify	YOO nuh fie	un eye fie
unilateral	YOO nuh lat tur ul	un ill ate ral
union	YOOn yun	un yun
unique	yoo NEEK	un I.Q.
unisex	YOO nuh sex	un eye sex
unison	YOO nuh son	un eye son
unit	YOO nit	un it
Unitarian	YOO nuh tayr ee un	un it ar ee un
unitary	YOO nit tayr ree	un it ar ee
unite	Yoo NYH'T	un it ee
unity	YOO nit tee	un eye tea
universal	YOO nuh VUR sul	un I verse'll
universe	YOO nuh VUR ss	un eye verse
university	YOO nuh VUR suh tee	un Eye verse city
univocal	Yoo NIVV uh cull	un eye vocal
Ural	YOOr'll	urr Al
uranium	Y'oor RAY nee um	urr Annie um

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Invisible Y Word	Pronounce it	Please DON'T say
urea	yoor REE uh	ur E. uh
uretha	yoor REE thuh	ur et ha
uric	YOOR rik	ur ick
urinal	YOOR in ul	ur in AL
urinary	YOOR in airy	ur in airy
urinate	YOOR in Nate	ur in ate
urine	YOOR in	ur INE
usage	YOO sij	us AGE
use, to	YOOZ	us E
use, the	YOO-ss	oose
used to, is	YOOZ'd too, iz	us Ed too, is
used to, we	YOO stuh, wee	us Ed too, we
usual	YOO zhoo ull	us Sue Al
usurp	Yoo ZURP	us urp
Utah	YOO taw	utt ah
Ute	YOOT	utty
utensil	Yoo TEN sil	utt en sill
utilitarian	Yoo TIL uh TAY'r ee un	ut ill I tar I an
utility	Yoo TILL uh tee	utt I lie tie
utopia	Yoo TOH pee uh	uh top eye uh
utopian	Yoo TOH pee un	uh TOP EYE Ann
vehicular	vee HIK kYoo lur	Vee high color
view	v'YOO	Vi E. wuh
whew	hwoo or hw'YOO	wuh he wuh

AN EXCELLENT PROJECT for a high school office practice class, graphic arts class, typing class or art class would be to make FLASH CARDS based on this list. The students making the cards may even learn a word or two while they are at it.

FRONT

usual

BACK

Say: "YOO zhoo ul"